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AGAWAM ADVERTISER NEWS

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PUBLIC WORKS

Rate hikes sought for aging sewer system

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

Sewer rates are going up, the DPW director told a City Council subcommittee last week. The only question is whether the council will adopt several small bumps or one big hike.

Last Tuesday night, Public Works Director Christopher Golba asked a council subcommittee to support an increase in the current sewer rate, which is \$3.04 per hundred cubic feet of water used.

Golba, who was joined by a representative from Tighe & Bond, conducted an analysis of

the current sewer system and found a need for several pricey projects in the coming years.

Rates haven't risen since Jan. 1, 2012. At one point, the wastewater enterprise fund had a substantial positive balance, but it's been eaten away by deficits and capital spending over the past few years.

"We have had to use retained earnings to balance the budget for the last few years," Golba said.

There is only about \$514,000 remaining in the retained earnings that could be used for projects and emergencies. Earlier this year the town had to spend \$269,000 on a water main break

on Main Street.

Councilor Christopher Johnson criticized the plan recommended by Golba to raise the sewer rate 61 percent over the next six years, with 10 percent increases in the rate each of those

SEWER | page 6

HIGH SCHOOL

Learning what she 'nose'

Teen law students
get first-hand look at
K-9 detection skills

By Mike Lydick
aan@turley.com

Shea, a 5 1/2-year-old female German shepherd, is a friendly dog that laps up attention and loves to be petted. But the K-9 is all business when it comes to sniffing out explosive devices.

On Tuesday morning, more than two dozen AHS students saw first-hand how Shea focuses on her work during a demonstration in the school's gym. Shea, along with Peter Signorelli, her human partner, helped to educate students from two Practical Law classes about how canine units

DOG | page 7



Agawam High School students rush to greet and pet Shea, a German shepherd trained to sniff out explosive devices, following a demonstration by Peter Signorelli, her handler (far left, with sunglasses), on Tuesday. TURLEY PUBLICATIONS PHOTO BY MIKE LYDICK

OFFICIALS' SALARIES

Mayor pledges to veto any raise in his pay

By Michael J. Ballway
mballway@turley.com

Even if city councilors want to give the mayor a raise, he won't take it.

"Now is not the time to increase the mayor's salary," Agawam Mayor Richard Cohen said in a letter dated Dec. 5. "Should the matter be approved by the City Council, I want to make it extremely clear that I will veto it upon reaching my desk and continue to oppose it."

He was responding to a proposed ordinance authored by Councilor Christopher Johnson — and based on a proposal by School Committee member Anthony Bonavita — that would increase the mayor's salary from \$85,000 to \$95,000, effective January 2018. The salary increase appeared on the Dec. 5 council agenda as new business, and may be discussed at the council's Dec. 19 meeting.

Bonavita originally proposed an increase in the compensation for all elected officials — mayor, councilors and School Committee members — in October. City Council President James Cichetti said in November that he would not push for the change, but would not block the debate if the mayor or another city councilor were to sponsor it.

Cohen described his opinion on a change in his salary as "enormous opposition."

"The real issue is where our priorities lay within the budget," Cohen said in his letter. "It has always been a focus of my administration to operate a budget that provides the services needed and deserved by the residents while always balancing those needs with the burdens of the taxpayers. That balance is a continuous challenge that has grown more difficult over the last several years. I would rather place additional monies in roads, sidewalks, education, public safety and senior concerns instead of giving the mayor's position an 11.76 percent increase."

Cohen did not offer an opinion on a related ordinance change

RAISE | page 5

WADE PARK

Delayed playground opens on Franklin St.

By Michael J. Ballway
mballway@turley.com

The official grand opening will wait until next year, but Benjamin Wade Park is "substantially complete" with a playground ready for neighborhood kids.

Parks and Recreation Director Christopher Sparks said this week that the playscape elements, which were delivered two months late, were finally installed in the Franklin Street park in late November and are open for use now.

More parks eyed for
Feeding Hills, page 3

"The only thing we didn't get to was the poured-in-place rubber surface, just because the weather wouldn't let us do it this late in the season," Sparks said. "We did put wood chips in, to make sure it has a safe surface to last us until next spring or summer."

Sparks said the cost of installing and eventually removing the

wood chips will be paid by the manufacturer of the playscape, as compensation for missing the contracted delivery date in the summer. He said the town will replace the wood chips next year with a rubberized surface similar to the playground flooring at other town parks.

Before this year, the park consisted of a large field, asphalt basketball court and gravel parking lot between the Agawam Housing

PARK | page 6



New playground equipment was recently installed at Wade Park in Feeding Hills. TURLEY PUBLICATIONS PHOTO BY MICHAEL J. BALLWAY



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Hi, Buddy!



The Parks and Recreation Department installed Agawam's first "Buddy Bench" last week at School Street Park. The blue-and-red bench was funded by a donation from the "Be Kind" group in town. The bench provides a way for children to indicate that they are looking for a new friend to play with. The town has also poured concrete footings for five additional benches, another at School Street Park and one each at the town's elementary schools. After the concrete fully hardens, the benches will be installed in the spring, Parks and Rec Director Christopher Sparks said. Four of the benches were funded by Be Kind; the Granger School bench was a gift of the Girl Scouts. TURLEY PUBLICATIONS PHOTOS BY MICHAEL J. BALLWAY

Learn 'happy child' tips Tuesday

The Agawam Family and Community Program will sponsor "Raising a Happy Child" with guest speaker Jeanine Fitzgerald, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 13, at the Agawam Public Library.

Fitzgerald draws on more than 30 years of professional experience to empower teachers and parents to achieve more with children "at risk."

With experience as a certified teacher,

mental health professional and mother of three grown children, she understands the promise of every child, as well as the diversity of their needs. She will discuss the pursuit of happiness for our children by defining it, examining attributes that lead to it and applying ways to behave that achieve it.

Registration is not required. The library is at 750 Cooper St., Agawam.



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Music Speaks concert to benefit Toys for Tots

A "Rocks for Tots" toy drive will be hosted by Music Speaks music school Sunday, Dec. 11. The concert will take place from 3 to 7 p.m. and will feature bands of Music Speaks students performing at "The Tank" at American Legion Post 185, 478 Springfield St., Feeding Hills. Admission is \$10 per person plus a new, unwrapped toy to be donated to Toys for Tots, a program run by the United States Marine Corps Reserve which distributes toys to children whose parents cannot afford to buy them gifts for Christmas.

Dave's gift cards support animal agencies

Dave's Soda and Pet City will be sharing holiday cheer this December by donating a percentage of its gift card sales to two local pet agencies. The Dakin Humane Society and Thomas J. O'Connor Animal Control and Care Center will receive 10 percent of the gift card purchases totaling \$50 or more.

Gift cards may be purchased throughout December at any Dave's Soda and Pet City locations, including the one at 151 Springfield St., Agawam. Dave's Soda and Pet City began in 1975 and is a mini-chain of seven superstores with more than 150 employees.

Dakin Humane Society is a community supported animal welfare organization that provides shelter, medical care, spay and neuter services, and behavioral rehabilitation for more than 20,000 animals each year.

The Thomas J. O'Connor Animal Control and Adoption Center provides animal control services for Springfield, Chicopee and Holyoke. Animal control officers respond to routine service calls Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Emergency response for ill, injured or aggressive animals is available 24 hours a day.

Senior Christmas show to feature Mitnick singers

The Agawam Senior Center will host its annual Christmas holiday show, Richie and Kathy Mitnick and the Sounds of Music Singers at 1 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 14.

Admission is \$3 per person and two canned goods and \$5 per person without canned goods. Refreshments will be served.

The Senior Center is at 954 Main St., Agawam.

Advent, Christmas services planned at St. John's

St. John the Evangelist Church, 833 Main St., Agawam, will offer adoration and confessions from 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday evenings during Advent. The public is welcome. Christmas Eve Masses will take place at 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 24. In addition to Midnight Mass, Christmas Day Masses will take place at 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

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Study could outline future parks priorities

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

Wade Park may be only the beginning. Town Procurement Officer Jennifer Bonfiglio hopes to commission a study of Agawam's recreation needs, and expects it may focus on new or improved parks in Feeding Hills.

City Council President James Cichetti and Vice President Joseph Mineo both attended the annual meeting of the Community Preservation Act Committee a few months ago and suggested a formal study of the town's recreation facilities, now that School Street Park is open. They also noted, as other members of the public have, that many of the recent parks projects have been on the eastern side of town.

Bonfiglio said a couple of parks have been mentioned, including Valley Brook Park in Feeding Hills. "It's in disrepair and is overgrown," said Bonfiglio. "But both Jimmy [Cichetti] and Joe [Mineo] have mentioned that Feeding Hills has not seen a lot of CPA money for parks."

The CPA, an off-budget account is funded by a property tax surcharge, contributed \$120,000 to the new playground and basketball court at Wade Park on Franklin Street, a figure dwarfed by the millions spent on two phases of School Street Park. Bonfiglio said a formal study, undertaken by a consultant, could allow the CPA Committee to assess all park needs on a town-wide basis.

"Right now, the CPA Committee reacts to the applications that are brought in

front of it," said Bonfiglio. "This study could help give them an idea of what they would be facing how much money they have to spend."

Councilor Anthony Suffriti also identified a pet project recently, saying the press box at Kirk Parker Field behind Phelps School is in need of work.

Bonfiglio said the CPA Committee relies on Parks and Recreation Director Christopher Sparks to provide input on the parks that need work in town. His feedback will continue to be important, as well.

She said the study will hopefully take place early next year.

"I am working on putting together the [request for proposals] and am hoping to have it go out sometime in January," said Bonfiglio.

Once the bids come in, she would have to make a formal funding request to the CPA Committee and City Council to pay for the study. She does not yet have an estimated cost for the study, and said she will need to do a little bit more homework to come up with a figure.

"I am still researching this and will have to see what other towns have done in the past," she said.

Agawam's CPA fund currently has about \$2.2 million, of which about \$1.4 million can be used on recreation projects. Recreation projects have received the most funding from the CPA since its inception in 2003, with such large projects as School Street Park, Borgatti Park and the new high school athletic facilities being funded in the past few years.

CO2 brings harmony to New Year

The New Year will start in a harmonious manner when the Agawam Cultural Council presents the acoustic rock duo CO2 at the Agawam Senior Center on Friday, Jan. 6. The concert is the latest offering in this 13th season of the council's popular Applause Series.

Vocalist Mike Scott and guitarist-vocalist Mark Wassung are CO2, a duo known for beautifully blended harmonies. Scott and Wassung will perform hits from the Everly Brothers, Simon and Garfunkel, Johnny Cash, Neil Diamond and others.

Raised in musical families, Wassung and Scott have been around music their entire lives, and have more than three decades of experience in front of audiences. They have performed together as CO2 for the past six years at venues throughout Massachusetts and Connecticut.

The Agawam Senior Center is at 954 Main St. and can be reached by phone at 413-821-0604. This and all Applause Series events are free and open to the public. For more information, visit www.agawamcc.org.

The Agawam Cultural Council is an all-volunteer local partner of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency that provides part of its funding. The Cultural Council is charged with bringing engaging, entertaining, and educational events and opportunities in the arts, humanities,



Acoustic rock duo CO2 will play a free concert Friday, Jan. 6, at the Agawam Senior Center. SUBMITTED PHOTO

and interpretive sciences to children and adults from Agawam and the surrounding communities.

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'Knight' school

Fire Chief Alan Sirois presents a certificate to fourth-grade student Joseph Cullane who won a Granger School contest to name the AFD's new ambulance, "Knight of Valor." Joseph, 9, said he came up with the name for the 2016 International Terrastar Titan to symbolize the brave and honorable work of firefighters. He said it's "a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see an ambulance I named drive around town helping people." The ambulance will be based at Station 2 in Feeding Hills, just down the street from Granger School. Sirois began working with the schools last year to suggest nicknames for new AFD vehicles; last year, Phelps School students named an ambulance "St. Raphael's Chariot." TURLEY PUBLICATIONS PHOTOS BY MIKE LYDICK

Granger Principal Cheryl Salomão takes a picture of Joseph Cullane with some of his classmates as they gathered in front of the "Knight of Valor" ambulance. Joseph's mother Caterina and his older sister Bianca, an AHS senior, School Superintendent William Sapelli, and Mayor Richard Cohen also were on hand for the unveiling.

Grange to hold holiday bazaar Saturday

Community Grange 382 of Feeding Hills will hold a holiday bazaar on Saturday, Dec. 10, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Grange Hall, 47 N. West St. in Feeding Hills. Members of the Grange have been busy making gift items, ornaments, wreaths and more. The bake sale will be bigger than last year's and will include the Grange's homemade

baked beans. Paws-a-tively Delectable will be selling all-natural dog treats, bandanas and gift items along with knitted items by Joelle, Tastefully Simple, BlueDogs Craft and Decorative Painting by Peg Sullivan. All proceeds will benefit Grange activities and the public is invited to attend. For more information, call Pauline at 413-789-2061.

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Opinion

OUR VIEW

Time to take a vacation

Consider this: as a nation, Americans averaged 16.2 days of vacation in 2015.

While at first glance, using more than two weeks of vacation sounds like a great accomplishment in the face of trying economic times, this figure is nearly a full work week less than the average of 20.3 days from 1976 to 2000.

In fact, according to data compiled by Project: Time Off in their report "The State of American Vacation 2016," more than half of all Americans failed to use all of their available time — 658 million days — and this failure by Americans to use their available vacation days resulted in \$223 billion in lost spending, 1.6 million jobs lost and \$65 million in lost income.

As a region, 58 percent of New Englanders failed to use all of their vacation days, second only to the Pacific states.

According to the report, the difference in the amount of time workers fail to use correlates to their perception about using it and their expectation as an employee in a constantly connected digital universe. Citing a GfK poll, 37 percent of workers fear returning to a mountain of work and 30 percent feel that no one else is capable of doing their job. These figures jump to 47 percent and 37 percent, respectively, for those in management positions.

The Project: Time Off report also highlights that those who plan vacation time are more likely to use it, with 51 percent of planners using all their vacation time and 69 percent using one week or more.

Surprisingly, while the majority of workers fail to use their available time, 95 percent say using such paid time off is important to them. Twenty-seven percent report that they lose their unused time at the end of the year.

We may be too late for a beach trip or a campout, but there are still a couple weeks left to take a day off. Whether it's a couple snow days at a ski resort, doing some last-minute Christmas shopping or just having a day to veg out in front of the TV, it's time for folks to get personal and reclaim a piece of their lives.

If December's a lost cause, at least make it your New Year's resolution to take your full vacation benefit in 2017. The same Project: Time Off report suggests that an average of one day more of vacation used equates to an extra \$34 billion in spending. Those looking for a personal incentive: the report documents that employees using 11 or more days of vacation time are more likely to have received a raise or bonus in the last three years.

It's time for folks to stop losing time and reclaim their lives through a vacation. In the end, everyone benefits.

What do you think? Send letters to the editor to aan@turley.com.

Let us know

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Our office is open Monday through Thursday mornings, and other weekday times by appointment.



YESTERDAY'S HOMETOWN NEWS

Eddie Neilson Hall of Fame war hero

About four years ago, Nancy Neilson called me to suggest that her dad, Eddie Neilson, might be an interesting story. She gave me his phone number and told me that although he was almost 90, he still drove around better than most drivers. Eddie agreed to meet me at McDonald's — where else? Sitting there waiting, I wondered if it would be a problem to figure out which man was Eddie. Then came in a man with a scrapbook under his arm. That solved that problem. What I thought would be a 20-minute chat lasted an hour and a half. I got to meet one of the most remarkable persons to ever graduate from Agawam High.

Eddie Neilson moved to Agawam when he was nine years old. It was the Depression and he was taken in to the home of Herman Cordes at 50 Monroe St. That home is not number 50 now, but it's easy to find if you drive down Elbert Road and go around the curve. Straight ahead is where Eddie grew up. I see that house practically every day and many times I think of Eddie living there and playing football at AHS.

Eddie was the quarterback of the 1940 football team and is possibly that team's last living member. The team was recently inducted into the Agawam Hall of Fame and if you were lucky to be at the banquet, you got to hear Eddie Neilson tell about some of his life, which could be a chapter in a book about Agawam's finest.

Quarterbacking the championship 1940 team and handing the ball off to legendary Joe Pisano was just the beginning for Eddie. In 1945 he was a staff sergeant fighting in the Battle of the Bulge for the U.S. Army in Europe under General Douglas MacArthur and Agawam's General Creighton Abrams. Maybe you heard him tell the story at the Hall of Fame banquet about when he met Abrams. If wasn't in Europe; it was after the war when he bought some gas at a station in Feeding Hills Center, a block from Creighton's sister's home. (Elizabeth Abrams '34)

When Eddie got back from Europe he continued his marriage to Norma Swanson '40. They had been classmates but he ended up a '41 thanks to Harm Smith's trick of having a player drop English and play another year for him. There was no age rule back then and surely, Harm wasn't the only coach with the gimmick.

Eddie worked for Armour Co. in Springfield for 32 years and raised his family on the Agawam-Suffield line, just barely in Suffield on South Westfield Street. His son Glen is a project manager for Gilbane Corp. and presently in charge of the construction of the new Enfield High School. Before that, Glen had been the project manager for the construction of the new Longmeadow High School, the Hartford Convention Center and buildings at UMass and Deerfield Academy.

Eddie's daughter Nancy is an executive secretary at New England Orthopedic in Springfield. Her call to me four years ago gave me a friend whose high school yearbook had put "The smile that won't wear off" under his name.

Four of Eddie's grandchildren went to the Hall of Fame banquet. Nelson came from Amsterdam, Holland; Michael from Arkansas; Carly from Portsmouth, N.H.; and Jamie from Enfield.

Many of Eddie's friends from Suffield came — Jeff Perry, Tim Bellmore,

John Sawyer, Roger Pryor, Rick Euliano, Tom Zavisa, Al Diluzio, Rich Monighetti and Rick Gemme. You can meet Eddie and his friends at Dunkin' Donuts in Suffield at 9 a.m. I stop once a month and hope to see Eddie once a month forever. He's probably the Brownie who is most thankful for having grown up in Agawam and having played football for Harm Smith. A special thanks to Nancy Neilson for calling me.

Walt Willard went to AHS and taught math there for 16 years. He can be reached at 413-786-7924. Call him. Walt loves your feedback and any and all information or tidbits you can offer.



Walt Willard



Eddie Neilson



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FAITH MATTERS

Overcoming insecurities

At times it can be overwhelming when you are pursuing God’s plan for your life. When God reveals His plan to you, it is usually beyond your current skill set or ability. It can also be beyond your level of education and outside of your financial budget. It will stretch you and challenge you to come out of your comfort zone and start becoming the person He desires for you to be.

Sometimes this can leave us in a state of insecurity, as we will have a tendency to feel small compared to the big plan that God has shown us. Yes, it can seem overwhelming at times, but you must understand and know that it’s not impossible.

The key to overcoming your insecurities is to start trusting in God’s ability and not your feelings. When God called Gideon to raise up an army to defeat the enemy, Gideon was overwhelmed with feelings of insecurity. He thought for sure, how could he be the one to do such a great thing. He

came up with every excuse possible that stemmed from his own insecurity. I’m too poor. I’m too weak.



John Schuler

God didn’t leave Gideon in a state of insecurity and he won’t leave you there, either. As you learn to trust in His Word and apply it to your life, you will begin to gain a level of confidence and courage that overrides any feelings of insecurity.

Remember that nothing great or extraordinary happens in your comfort zone. This means that you will have to break out of any insecurity mindsets that you may have and start seeing yourself as God sees you. God sees you as a victor. He sees you as an “overcomer.” He sees you as a mighty person who is going to accomplish great things in life.

John Schuler is a deacon at Hope Community Church on South Westfield Street in Feeding Hills.

RAISE ■ from page 1

sponsored by Johnson, to increase the stipends of School Committee members by 40 percent.

Under that proposal, the six elected school board members would see their annual stipend raised from \$5,000 per person to \$7,000. This is identical to Bonavita’s proposal from October. In proposing the increased stipend, Johnson said it would help attract more qualified candidates for School Committee by offering “a salary commensurate with the duties and responsibilities of the position.”

Bonavita had also proposed increasing city councilors’ stipends. Agawam councilors are paid \$10,000 per year, a number that Bonavita proposed raising to \$12,000. The council is not currently considering any proposed changes to its own stipends.

According to a list attached to the proposed mayoral salary resolution, Cohen’s salary of \$85,000 is outside the top 50 in town government. The highest paid town employee is the superintendent of schools, at \$187,000. Almost 30 school administrators, police officers and fire officers are paid

more than \$100,000. Within Town Hall, the collector-treasurer (\$125,871), city clerk (\$101,229), IT director (\$98,655), assessor (\$89,584) and building maintenance director (\$88,972) all had higher salaries than the mayor in fiscal 2015.

If the mayor’s salary had been \$95,000 in fiscal 2015, it would have ranked 40th on the list of municipal salaries, just above two police officers and just below the school athletic director.

Johnson’s resolution states that the mayor’s salary hasn’t been changed since January 2008, while “all employees of the town of Agawam, including School Department employees, have seen significant increases in their salaries” since that time, and “most area communities with a mayoral form of government have increased the salary for the position of mayor since January of 2008.”

Agawam’s mayoral salary of \$85,000 is identical to that of Chicopee and Holyoke. Westfield pays its mayor \$100,000 per year; West Springfield, \$110,000.

Junior Women to meet Dec. 13

The final club meeting of 2016 for the GFWC Agawam Junior Women’s Club will be held Tuesday, Dec. 13, at the Agawam Senior Center. A social with refreshments will begin at 6 p.m., followed by the pro-

gram and business meeting at 6:30 p.m. The Senior Center is at 954 Main St., Agawam. The entrance for the meeting is in the back.

School Committee meeting

Roberta G. Doering School
68 Main St.
Tuesday, Dec. 13 — 7 p.m.

1. Call to order
2. Moment of silence
3. Roll call of attendance
4. Regular meeting – 7 p.m.
5. Citizen’s Speak Time
6. Highlights on Education: Phelps and Robinson Park 4th Grade Holiday Concert
7. Superintendent’s Notes
8. Student Advisory Committee representative update
9. Unfinished business: None
10. Business meeting
 - a. Routine matters
 - 1) Approval of minutes
 - 2) Calendar/Correspondence
 - b. Warrants/Transfers
 - c. Reports:
 - 1). Scheduled reports:
 - * LPVEC update (paper report)
 - 2) Subcommittee updates
11. New business:
 - a. SCR-16-29, Adoption of Municipal Modernization Bill Language Regarding the Signing of Warrants
12. Any other items that may legally come before the committee
13. Adjournment

DEATH NOTICES

Cotto, Beverly A.
Died Nov. 27
Private funeral
Curran-Jones Funeral Home
Agawam

Grimaldi, William G. Sr.
Died Nov. 29
Funeral Dec. 5
Curran-Jones Funeral Home
Agawam

Agawam Advertiser News

OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$75, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

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“Aging in Place” Program

The town of Agawam, with assistance from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, is seeking grant funding to assist qualified seniors age 65 and over to fund the Agawam Aging in Place Program. Low and moderate income senior homeowners would be eligible to receive a “grant” of up to \$5,000 to implement improvements which will allow occupants to remain safely in their homes. Eligible improvements include, but are not limited to: safety repairs, grab bars, handrails, non-slip stair treads, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, furnace and chimney cleaning, door and window locks, removal of code violations and other similar repairs which improve the safety and functionality of one’s home.

In addition to being 65 or more years of age and residing in the home that you own, applicants must also meet the following income guidelines according to household size.

Annual household incomes cannot be greater than:
(circle one according to your household size):

HH Size	1 person	2 person	3 person	4 person	5 person	6 person	7 person	8 person
Income	\$46,000	\$52,600	\$59,150	\$65,700	\$71,000	\$76,250	\$81,500	\$86,750

If you meet the above age and ownership guidelines and fall within the above noted income limits, please complete the following and return to the address at the bottom of this page.

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Type of improvements needed: _____

Please return to:
James M. Mazik
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
60 Congress Street
Springfield, MA 01104

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A PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Holy Spirit, You who made me see everything and showed me the way to reach my ideal. You, who gave me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and you, who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue want to thank you for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from you no matter how great the material desire may be. I want to be with you and my loved ones in your perpetual glory. Amen. Thank you for your love towards me and my loved ones. Persons must pray the prayer three consecutive days without asking your wish. After third day wish will be granted no matter how difficult it may be. Then promise to publish this dialogue as soon as this favor is granted. I will never stop trusting God and His power. J.G.



Improvements at Wade Park also included resurfacing the basketball court. TURLEY PUBLICATIONS PHOTOS BY MICHAEL J. BALLWAY

PARK ■ from page 1

Authority’s Brady Village and Wade Village properties, just off Springfield Street in Feeding Hills. Both the basketball court and parking lot have been resurfaced, and a new sidewalk links them together. Between is the new playground. Sparks said the town also plans to install two picnic tables and three granite benches in time for next summer, as well as a metal bench at the basketball court.

Though the park isn’t entirely complete, Sparks said anyone is welcome to use it.

“If the kids are looking for something to do, it’s there for them,” he said. “The park won’t close, but like all of our parks, we do get more use in the summer. I do expect heavy use throughout these early winter and winter months, whenever there’s no snow cover.”

The park is the only public playground in Feeding Hills that isn’t attached to a school. Sparks had said, earlier this year, that he wanted to build a playground at Wade Park because of its proximity to two Housing Authority properties, as well as a surrounding residential neighborhood



The new playscape at Wade Park includes features for all ages.

underserved by parks. The closest other playgrounds are a long walk away, at Granger or Robinson Park elementary schools.

Work at Wade Park cost approximately \$175,000, with \$120,000 coming from the town’s Community Preservation Act account, which is funded by a surcharge on local property taxes. Parks and Rec also drew \$50,000 from Berkshire Power and \$5,000 from the Housing Authority.

The Berkshire Power donation is part of a 40-year series of community payments the company agreed to make when the power plant opened in 2001. Parks and Rec receives 40 percent of Berkshire’s annual donation to the town, which increases every year. The Parks and Rec share was \$64,188 in 2016; in 2017, it will be \$66,114.

SEWER ■ from page 1

years. He said the hikes should be consolidated into just two hits, with big bumps spaced three years apart.

“There is no doubt that we need to raise the rates,” said Johnson. “But I question the strategy. I think we could do an increase that lasts two or three years rather than increases every year.”

Mayor Richard Cohen, who recommends the plan submitted by Golba and Tighe & Bond, said he disagrees with Johnson.

“We need to raise the rates, but this is the best way to make it gradual so residents are not absorbing large increases all at once,” the mayor said.

At the end of six years, the average sewer bill could go up by \$150 to \$200 per year, Tighe & Bond engineer Todd Brown said.

Johnson also questioned why the town would approve a schedule for rate hikes six years out when the council ap-

proved a study of sewer projects just this year. He recommended the council approve a rate increase that will last for two to three years and help build up the retained earnings while the town awaits the results of the study to better assess the sewer system’s capital spending needs.

Johnson asked why the DPW had not asked for a rate increase during the past four years, as the retained earnings account was being whittled down by \$400,000 to \$500,000 per year.

He said, however, that he had no doubt an increase in rates is needed now.

“When something like Main Street happens again, it could be a half-million (dollars) to fix it,” said Johnson.

The council has not yet received a formal request for the rate hike, making it unlikely a new rate would be voted on until at least January.

Seminar to explain Robert’s Rules

WEST SPRINGFIELD — The West of the River Chamber of Commerce will hold a Multi-Chamber Lunch ‘n’ Learn Seminar from noon to 1:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9, at Stor- rowton Tavern. Featured guest Robert McDonald will give a presentation on Robert’s Rules of Order. Lunch will be served. Tickets for guests are \$35 each. Sponsorship opportunities are available for this event. Register online at www.westoftheriverchamber.com. For more information contact the chamber office at 413-426-3880 or email info@westoftheriverchamber.com.

Storrowson Tavern is on the Eastern States Exposition grounds at 1305 Memorial Ave., West Springfield.

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SHIPPING ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

YOUR NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

PAYMENT ENCLOSED:

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HOUSE REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE
Town of Agawam

The town of Agawam, with assistance from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, is seeking grant funding to assist qualified low and moderate income homeowners in eliminating building code violations, improving unsafe or unhealthy conditions, improving weatherization, or making other necessary repairs. Subject to demand, funds may be available for eligible homeowners including those with housing repair emergencies. If interested, please fill out the following form and return to the PVPC. ALL information received is strictly confidential and will be maintained in the Springfield office of the PVPC. If you have questions, please contact PVPC’s Housing Coordinator Shirley Stephens at (413) 781-6045.

Name: _____
Street Address: _____
Type of improvements needed _____

For P.V.P.C. use only

Date Received: _____
Staff Initials: _____

My annual household income is not greater than:
(circle one according to your household size):

	1 person	2 person	3 person	4 person	5 person	6 person	7 person	8 person
Income	\$46,000	\$52,600	\$59,150	\$65,700	\$71,000	\$76,250	\$81,500	\$86,750

Please return to: Shirley Stephens, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission,
60 Congress Street, 1st Floor, Springfield, MA 01104

DOG ■ from page 1

operate, their duties and responsibilities, and how handlers interact with the dogs.

Signorelli works for MSA Security, which specializes in providing canine teams trained in explosive detection. He has 30 years of experience as a canine officer. Signorelli recently retired from the Hampden County sheriff's office to join the national security company that trains bomb dog teams to sniff out potential threats in stadiums, airports, amphitheaters, cargo loading docks and other large complexes.

Several training sample bags containing an explosive odor were placed around the gym. As Segurelli walked with Shea, he gave her a command to seek, and her nose began constantly smelling for the odor of explosives. She quickly zeroed in on the packets hidden behind closed bleacher sections.

'Fantastic' demonstration

"This demonstration was fantastic — we've been talking in our class about what the dogs can do, so it correlated well with what we're learning," said Olivia Brooks, 17, a senior.



Shea, a female German shepherd, reacts to an explosive odor from a training packet hidden in the gym's bleachers as her handler Peter Signorelli looks on. The demonstration gave Agawam High School's Practical Law classes a look at how bomb-detecting canine teams work. TURLEY PUBLICATIONS PHOTOS BY MIKE LYDICK

Brooks is taking Practical Law — an elective for juniors and seniors that emphasizes criminal law — because her career goal is to one day be a criminal prosecutor. She wants to learn about all aspects of the criminal justice system, including police K-9s.

She said one of the things that stood out for her was learning how much overseas experience — particularly in the Middle East — that the security company's K-9s have had.

"I didn't know that these dogs worked overseas — they really have been put through the wringer," she said. "Doing an NFL game must be nothing compared to that."

Another law class student, senior Tyler Corliss, called the demonstration impressive.

"I was very impressed not only with the way the handler worked, but also with his dog," said the 17-year-old, who is planning a career in the criminal justice field. "The dog was well-trained — she listened to everything her handler said and what he told her to do."

Katie Hryniewicz, also a senior and 17, wants to combine a business career with working with K-9s. She said the demonstration reinforced that decision.

"I learned more about the pros and cons of K-9 work that will help me if I continue in this field. If anything, it convinced me more that I want to do this," she said.

She added that the demonstration showed how valuable it is to have trained dogs in law enforcement and security: "They can find odors that humans can't smell — it takes time and training to do this, but it's an important tool to use when needed."

Dogs and the law

David Federico, a social studies teacher who teaches Practical Law, said that as police K-9s become more visible in schools and society, it's important that his students understand the dogs' usefulness and value to law enforcement. The course gives students a legal background as well as the



Shea the bomb-sniffing dog greets AHS students gathered in the school's gym earlier this week. Peter Signorelli holds her leash while talking to more than 30 students from two Practical Law classes.

opportunity to study contemporary legal cases and precedents.

"My law classes are currently learning about search and seizure law — the Fourth Amendment — so the demonstration tied perfectly into our curriculum," said Federico, who in past years has taken his law students to the K-9 unit at Connecticut's Enfield Correctional Institution.

"They were able to see the dogs scale walls, navigate obstacle courses, chase suspects, and find drugs. It was a truly exciting and valuable experience for the students," he added.

Although he hasn't been able to bring students to the prison for several years, he said this week's demonstration was "the next best opportunity" for students to become more knowledgeable about the work of K-9 teams in the legal system.

Brooks, Corliss, and Hryniewicz said while police dogs play a big role in criminal law cases, they also appreciated learning how much work the trained dogs do to keep the country safe and protect society by detecting explosives and drugs.

"I definitely felt a sense of security after the demonstration," Corliss said. Brooks said seeing the K-9s in action could act as a deterrent to anyone who might want to bring any drugs to school.

Added Hryniewicz, "I think all kids at our school should see this kind of demonstration — so they can appreciate how much safer we are than we think and how much is being done to keep us safe. It was a pleasure to have a K-9 team come to show us how they're helping to keep our country safe."

Public Safety

POLICE LOG

The Agawam Police Department responded to 283 calls for service from Nov. 29 to Dec. 5. The department recorded three arrests in its public log.

Wednesday, Nov. 30

Shawn Aaron Daniels, 24, of Springfield St., Feeding Hills, was arrested on charges of disorderly conduct and trespassing.

Saturday, Dec. 3

William J. Bertrand, 29, of North West Street, Feeding Hills, was arrested on charges of discharging a firearm within 500 feet of a building, possession of a firearm without FID card, possession of ammunition without firearm identification card, vandalizing property — defacement of real or personal property, assault with a

dangerous weapon (handgun), possession of Class B drug, possession of Class C drug, subsequent offense, possession of Class E drug, town ordinance violation — 94C one ounce or less Class D drug, receiving stolen property over \$250, and receiving stolen property over \$250 (handgun).

Terry M. Woods, 43, of Gilbert Avenue, Springfield, was arrested on a charge of trespassing.

FIRE LOG

Logs were not received from the Agawam Fire Department in time for the Agawam Advertiser News' deadline.

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
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65													67	
68													70	

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. No (Scottish)
- 4. Heroic tales
- 9. A way to tend
- 14. Not or
- 15. Where rockers play
- 16. Dutch name for Ypres
- 17. Ingested
- 18. A resident of California
- 20. Unfounded rumor
- 22. Oats
- 23. Type of women's coat
- 24. Life forms
- 28. Every
- 29. Alternating current
- 30. Withered
- 31. "Gymnopedies" composer
- 33. Plate glasses
- 37. Muscial artist — DeBarge
- 38. Before
- 39. Arrange in steps of size
- 41. Electron cloud model

- 42. Morning
- 43. Leonard __, famed Swiss mathematician
- 44. Capital city of Buenos Aires province
- 46. Snouts
- 49. Of I
- 50. Swiss river
- 51. Perplexes
- 55. Made angry
- 58. Precious stone
- 59. Type of envelope
- 60. One who believes in reason and knowledge
- 64. Monitors brain activity (abbr.)
- 65. Get __ of
- 66. Actress Zellweger
- 67. Spinal muscular atrophy (abbr.)
- 68. "Inferno" author
- 69. Puts together in time
- 70. Silvery-white metal

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Civil Rights group
- 2. Early Slavic society
- 3. Mammals that lack incisors and canines
- 4. Blasphemy
- 5. Israeli city
- 6. Put this in your hair
- 7. Black tropical American cuckoo
- 8. Month in the Islamic calendar
- 9. Begets
- 10. Court game
- 11. Painkiller
- 12. New Zealand parrot
- 13. Suffix
- 19. Egg cells
- 21. Another name for Thor
- 24. About pontiff
- 25. The academic world
- 26. Raise
- 27. Civil rights city in Alabama
- 31. Encompasses
- 32. Helmet
- 34. Nostrils
- 35. Lovable Spielberg alien
- 36. Divides
- 40. Ruthenium
- 41. Preceding all others in time
- 45. Past participle of lie
- 47. Fastener
- 48. Overindulged
- 52. Ancient lyric poem
- 53. Ardent supporter
- 54. Iranian village and Islamic pilgrim attire
- 56. A fragrant resin obtained from tropical trees
- 57. Semitic fertility god
- 59. Millisecond
- 60. Cool!
- 61. "Take on Me" singers
- 62. ESPN sportscaster Bob
- 63. Accommodating place

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St. David's Church

699 Springfield Street, Feeding Hills

Breakfast and Photo with Santa

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10th
9 a.m. – 11 a.m.



Bring the family for a complimentary pancakes and sausage breakfast. There will be activities for the kids, stories read with Mrs. Claus, a picture with Santa and a present for each child. There will be a minimal charge for each picture with Santa. For more information, please contact Jude or Sue O'Hare at St. David's at 413-786-6133.

Blue Christmas Service

Saturday, Dec. 17th at 1 pm

Do the holidays often leave you feeling sad and struggling? If you are feeling blue during the holidays for any reason, join us for our Blue Christmas Service. For more information, contact Fr. Harvey Hill at 413-786-6133.



Youth

FROM THE CHILDREN’S ROOM

Books to bring families together

It’s that time of year again. The sun is setting earlier, and the temperature is getting cooler. During this time of year, many of us just want to stay huddled up inside our houses. So often, each family member goes into a separate room to entertain themselves using their tablet or smartphone.

Instead of spreading out throughout the house, I encourage everyone to sit together as a family and read a book together. You are never too old (or too young) to enjoy the soothing sounds of being read to. After reading the book together, you can discuss the book together. Through books your family can be reminded that the greatest give we can give each other are simple acts of kindness.

This time of year many of us are focused on finding the perfect gift for that special someone. Let us try to remember that the perfect gift doesn’t always come from the store. These gifts, no matter the size, only reflect a part of what people mean to us. Through acts of kindness we can truly convey the importance of that person in our lives. The perfect gift might be as simple as a smile when you are sad or inviting someone new to play with you. It’s these small acts of kindness that are the true gift. And luckily, it’s a gift your family can give all year round.

Here are five picture books you can read as a family that can help promote acts of

kindness.

“The Story of Ferdinand,” by Munro Leaf, illustrated by Robert Lawson. In this book a bull named Ferdinand likes to sit quietly and smell the flowers, but one day he gets stung by a bee and his snorting and stomping wrongly convince everyone that he is the fiercest of bulls.

“The Peace Book,” by Todd Parr. This book describes peace as making new friends, sharing a meal, feeling good about yourself and more.

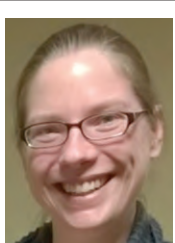
“A Sick Day for Amos McGee,” by Philip Stead. In this book a zookeeper always makes time to visit his friends who live at the zoo, until the day he must stay home because he is sick.

“Can I Play Too?” by Mo Willems. In this book Elephant and Piggie learn to play catch with their new friend Snake.

“The Lion and the Mouse,” by Jerry Pinkney This is a wordless retelling of an Aesop fable set in the African Serengeti. An adventuresome mouse proves that even a small creature is capable of great deeds when she rescues the King of the Jungle.

All of these books are available through the Agawam Public Library at 750 Cooper St. For more books on kindness or any other topic, visit your local library.

Pamela Weingart is the youth services librarian at Agawam Public Library.



Pamela Weingart



SUBMITTED PHOTO

School Lunch

AGAWAM HIGH SCHOOL

Monday, Dec. 12: Popcorn chicken smackers, seasoned rice, green beans, fresh and chilled fruit.

Tuesday, Dec. 13: French toast, cheese omelet, hash brown, sausage patty, fresh and chilled fruit.

Wednesday, Dec. 14: Chicken filet wrap with assorted sauce served with lettuce, tomato and cheese, side of pasta salad, fresh and chilled fruit.

Thursday, Dec. 15: Fresh assorted calzones, garden salad with light dressing, fresh and chilled fruit.

Friday, Dec. 16: All-beef hotdog, seasoned corn, cookie, fresh and chilled fruit.

AGAWAM JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL ROBERTA G. DOERING SCHOOL AGAWAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Monday, Dec. 12: French toast with syrup, pork sausage links, hash brown, fresh and chilled fruit.

Tuesday, Dec. 13: Turkey tacos, lettuce, salsa, cheese, tomatoes, Spanish rice, three-bean salad, fresh and chilled fruit.

Wednesday, Dec. 14: Meatball grinder, potato chips, seasoned corn, fresh and chilled fruit.

Thursday, Dec. 15: Baked chicken patty sandwich, baby carrots and ranch, low-fat Cape Cod chips, fresh and chilled fruit.

Friday, Dec. 16: Individual pizza round, salad with light dressing, fresh and chilled fruit, cookie.

AGAWAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS AGAWAM JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL BREAKFAST MENU

Monday, Dec. 12: Assorted low-sugar cereal, stuffed bagel sticks, mozzarella cheese, assorted muffins, juice or milk.

Tuesday, Dec. 13: Assorted low-sugar cereal, assorted nutrigrain bars, mozzarella cheese, assorted muffins, juice or milk.

Wednesday, Dec. 14: Assorted low-sugar cereal, warm cinnamon roll, mozzarella cheese, assorted muffins, juice or milk.

Thursday, Dec. 15: Assorted low-sugar cereal, assorted nutrigrain bar, mozzarella cheese, assorted muffins, juice or milk.

Friday, Dec. 16: Assorted waffles with syrup, string cheese, fresh fruit, juice or milk.

AHS COUNSELING BULLETIN

Special interest programs

The American Student Assistance College Planning Centers offer free assistance with completing financial aid applications, both in-person, at Centers and over the phone (877-33-4348). Additionally, the Boston College Planning Center is holding FAFSA Workshops every Saturday from 10 to 11 a.m. and Federal Student Aid ID Workshops every Tuesday from 6 to 7 p.m. More information is available by calling Kristi Pierce at 617-728-4608.

New England Institute of Technology will be hosting a series of Career Education Days to help students learn more about their potential careers —Engineering and Communications Day, March 3; Health Day, April 7. To register for any of these events go to NEIT.edu/Career-Education.

Westfield State University is offering early college access to high school students. Eligible students must have a “B” average or better in their high school classes in order to be eligible. Students wishing to pursue dual enrollment must meet all eligibility criteria which can be found at mass.edu/strategic/read_cdep.asp. The deadline for Spring 2017 is Dec. 9. The reduced tuition for a three-credit course is \$636 and a four-credit course is \$848.

Springfield Technical Community College and Holy-

oke Community College are again offering the chance for current juniors and seniors to take up to one free course in each semester through the College Now program. This is a great way to earn college credits while in high school while trying courses that may be helpful in exploring a potential career interest. See your counselor for details.

Elms College is offering the Advanced Placement Program to qualified students. Tuition is waived and students pay only a registration fee of \$20 and a technology fee of \$50. Registration for the spring 2017 semester should be submitted before Jan. 17. For more information, contact the registrar at 413-265-2314.

Are you a young entrepreneur? Graduating high school seniors who operate their own small business are eligible to receive a 2017 NFIB Young Entrepreneur Award from the NFIB Young Entrepreneur Foundation. Visit NFIB.com/YEA for more information and to apply online between by Dec. 18.

Scholarship information

Students should see their counselor or visit the websites for more information or an application: Hendry David Thoreau Foundation; GE-Reagan Foundation Scholarship Program; Make College Happen Challenge;

Sounds of the season



Agawam High School’s band and color guard were part of the Thanksgiving morning pageantry at the Brownies’ 40-28 road win over holiday rival West Springfield. TURLEY PUBLICATIONS PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

AGAWAM JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL HONOR ROLL

Agawam Junior High School principal Norm Robins recently announced the first term honor roll for the 2016-17 school year.

Grade 8: Abigail Agron, Mia Albano, Leesandra Alvarado, Thomas Arcelaschi, Noor Awkal, Rawan Awkal, Jacob Baeder, Emily Ball, William Balzano, Abel Barbaneagra, Kimberly Beaver, Christian Beavis, Demitra Benard, Trinity Blanchet, Sofia Blanchette, Joshua Bouchard, Reese Bourgeois, Madison Braska, Delaney Brown, Jacob Bruni, Kevin Bryden, Paige Budington, Hannah Cahill, Isabella Caputo, Madeline Cascio, James Chenevert, Kaan Cicek, Keeley Cote, Serena Croteau, Gianna Curto, Emily Czupta, David Dagenais, Justin Davis, Hannah Davydov, Troy Dean, Nicole Depergola, Marissa Deslauriers, Thalia Diaz-LaCasse, Anthony Dillard, Andrew Dzhendzheruha, Emily Ehresman, Anna Fedotova, Cristina Ferraro, Christian Fisk, Jocelyn Fonseca, Katherine Gauthier, Chase Gentile, Samantha Gentile, Ryan Gilbert, Joseph Glaessner, Andrea Gomez-Marin, Benjamin Gordon, Joseph Goudreau, Tyler Gouvan, Hope Gravanis, Kannon Grover, Jordan Gurau, Lauren Gurau, Julia Hall, Julia Hampton, Daniel Harpin, Mia Hastings, Molly Hastings, Sophie Hastings, Ashley Hurley, Vanessa Iodlovskaya, Olga Iovenco, Joseph Jendrysik, Alyssa Johnson, Margaret Johnston, Elizabeth Kane, Jacob Kibbe, Hannah Krafcik, Ciara Lamoureux, Emily Landry, Natalie Lane, Mason Laplante, Austin Larrabee, Brendan LeBlanc, Nina Liquori, Joseph Lochiatto, Jaron Luke, Colin Malecki, Stephanie Maloni, Frank Marasi, Katherine Matuza, Sydney Maxey, Brenna McAnanama, Meagan McKiernan, Siobhan McMahon, Yeva Meleshko, Victoria Miller, Sophia Moccio, Morgan Moriarty, Julia Nicosia, Chelsea Normand, Tia Nuzzolilli, Daniil Oliyevsky, Laine Page, Xander Pananas, Brooke Perry, Timothy Polevoy, Joshua Privedenyuk, Antonio Ramos, Hannah Richter, Jennifer Ritter, Vincenzo Romeo, Sarah Ross, Alayna Rossi, Christian Rua, Emma Rubacha, Sofia Ruiz, Olivia Salva, Sage Sarrazin, Jackson Schlosser, Jocelynn Schmuck, Sofia Sergeychik, Makenzie Shean, Kiley Sheehan, Vanessa Shepardson, Anna Shlemanov, Colin Shlosser, Alexandra Shur, Summer Smith, Talal Soffan, Brandon Spaulding, Giavana Spear, Annabella Spinney, Emily St. Pierre, Rowenn Stevens, McKenna Strong, Shawn Svoboda, Skylar Thies, Devon Thompson, Rilee Tourville, Connor Twohig, Josephine Typrowicz, Isabelle Uneeagar, Kayleah Unglaub, Alex Varenjev, Ella Votzakis, William Walsh, Abigail Waris, Jonathon Watson, Joseph Weyant, Emmerson White, Kaitlin Winters, Abby Work, Brian Wyckoff, Sulamita Yukhimets, Jennfier Yusenko, Jackson Zampiceni, Emma Zollo.

Grade 7: Amara Agosto, Jenna Alicea, Nina Baranov, Olivia Barbarini, Susan Belozeroval, Emalee Bisson, Aaliyah Brace, Alison Burbank, Kailey Butler, Virginia Caney, Lauren Carrier, Ryan Casagrande, Sarah Champigny, Anatoliy Chebanov, Cameron Chrisanthopoulos, Liliana Cicchetti, Cameron Cofer, Hannah Cote, Marisa Cote, Taylor Cotton, Jaden Couture, Evan Cruz, Mikayla Curley, Evan Danek, Allison Davenport, Jesse Davydov, Emily DeGeorge, Brooke Deming, Mia DiLullo, Nicholas Donovan, Alyssa Drumm, Megan Duquette, Angelina Dzyubenko, Ella Eastman, Amelia Ellison, Victoria Felton, Maxwell Florian, Jessica Fox, Sera Gagnon, Samuel Garfield, Livia Gavelis, Diana Ghareeb, Quinton Gill, Sofia Giordano, Jenel Gonzalez, Evalina Grechka, Emily Gulla, Greta Halford, Marissa Hermans, Joseph Higgins, Abbey Hildreth, Haley Hinshaw, Abigail Holmes, Jessica Huston, Samantha Izoita, Nino Izzo, Christopher Johnson, Autumn Jones, Minseo Kang, Allison Kasper-ek, Patrick Kelly, Shane Kendall, Lillian Kennedy, Leah Kenny, Ella Kinchak, Pilip Kirik, Kristina Kynal, Nathan LaBonte, Clara Laudato, Igor Lavrenchuk, Rachel Le, Brynn Legros, Leila Lendon, Olivia Liacos, Aurelius Liporada, Rebecca Littlehale, Jack Litz, Angelee Lombardo, Hannah Longtin, Mark Lukin, Patrick MacDonald, Alexander Marino, Vincent Martin, Kaycie McColley, Isabella McGregor, Aiden McKay, Benjamin Melnik, Samantha Mielnikowski, Emily Miolla, Emma Miolla, Jayden Montagna, Jacob Napolitan, Elijah Naylor, Matthew Nigro, Rebecca Obegenski, Kaeli Olson, Paige O’Neil, Summer O’Neil, Melina Ortiz, Emily Ottomaniello, Alexis Ouimette, Jaiden Pacheco, Jack Patterson, Grace Payne, Aniello Peluso, Amelia Pickett, Hayley Potter, Ali Qureshi, Dayna Rahilly, Selma Rahman, Isabella Recchia, Brooke Rising, Bella Rollend, Kaylee Sanchez, Jacob Sheehan, Kristina Sholopa, Nicholas Skorupski, Gianna Smith, Melena St. Jacques, Jessica Taylor, Ashlyn Thomas, Domenic Vecchiarelli, Vincent Wallace, Calista Watson, Dylan Wesley, Ernest Whitehead, Branden Wilbur, Mia Wood, Trinity Wright, Syeda Zahoor, Madison Zomek.

ST. THOMAS SCHOOL HONOR ROLL

WEST SPRINGFIELD — The following Agawam residents were among those named to the first quarter honor roll at St. Thomas the Apostle School in West Springfield.

First honors: Madeline Crouss, Katelyn Horky, grade 6.
Second honors: Elizabeth Gonet, grade 8.
Third honors: Ariel DiSanti, grade 7.

SPORTS

BASKETBALL

Brownies looking to continue progress

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

AGAWAM – The Agawam High School boys basketball team is getting ready to return to the court, and took on Granby High School earlier this week in a scrimmage. The Brownies are preparing for their season opener against the High School of Commerce, a team they narrowly defeated in their season opener last year. Agawam has gone through some pretty fast growth, with a crop of 10 players seeing regular action two years ago and evolving toward the end of the season. But

last season, that group progressed even further, and the Brownies had a strong league campaign and finished with a 14-6 record at the end of the regular season. The Brownies did graduate a number of players, but also return a core of now seniors that take their place. Impact players such as Meesha Ohradka are also back this season. Ohradka is a senior and was one of the leading scorers for the Brownies last season. He had the ability to hit shots from all over the court, and provided a lot of three-pointers. He finished with 359 points

last season, averaging 17.1 points per game. He had 48 three-pointers. At 625 points, he has an outside shot at 1,000 points if he can accrue 375 points this season. Coach Dave Federico said Ohradka and Jon Leclair are top senior guards and bring leadership, athleticism, and most importantly, scoring. Federico is also excited to have John Wright as a returning player. Wright found regular time on the floor as a freshman two years ago, but spent last season in South Carolina. Other seniors are Jose Lopez, Mike Basile, and Zach Hodges.

Kyler Currier and Dylan Christy are juniors. Jared Durocher, who had a phenomenal season as a running back for the football team, is a sophomore. Freshman Zach Moccio has also made the roster this season. Federico's team will be playing in the very crowded Suburban League, which now has eight teams. They will meet Minnechaug, Belchertown, Chicopee Comprehensive, Ludlow, South Hadley, Sabís, and Longmeadow twice each this year. Agawam made the playoff last season, and were winning a good contest against Amherst in the

opening round of the tournament before losing their lead in the second half and falling 80-64. Ohradka led the team with 28 points. This season, Agawam will start the season with three games in a week before a 13-day break from games. The Brownies resume play on Wednesday, Dec. 28 and then will be full steam ahead for January and February. Following Agawam's opener against Commerce, the Brownies will have their first home game on Dec. 12 against Northampton. The Blue Devils defeated Agawam in their only meeting of the season against them.

AWARD

Girls soccer team recognized for sportsmanship

Agawam's second such award in the last five years



Agawam girls soccer coach Laura Wray-Ramos accepts the Large Schools Sportsmanship Award last Friday night presented by Dianna Kolodziey. TURLEY PUBLICATIONS PHOTO BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

By Tim Peterson
Turley Publications Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW - The 70th annual Pioneer Valley Soccer Official Banquet was held at the Polish American Citizens Club in Ludlow last Friday night. Several players and teams from the Turley Publications coverage area received awards. Among the honorees, Tony Kibler, a volunteer with the Chicopee Youth Soccer Program, received a letter of commendation from Chicopee High School boys varsity soccer coach Tom Rivet. Minnechaug senior Mike Rita received the George E. Russell Award (Boys Division 1 MVP). Russell was the principal at Ludlow High School and he was

also responsible for forming the State Soccer Tournament. Rita is only the second Minnechaug boys soccer player to receive the Russell award since 1965. Chris Westlund was selected as the Division 1 MVP by the board in 2005. Rita, who scored 27 goals and had eight assists this fall, led the top-seeded Falcons (17-2-1) to the Western Mass. Division 1 semifinals. The Falcons lost a heartbreaker to Pittsfield, 3-2, in overtime. Following the season, Rita was selected to the Western Massachusetts Division 1 All-State and All-Region teams. He was also the first boys soccer player from Western Mass. to make the All-American team since Ryan

Reynolds (Cathedral) in 2012. Belchertown senior Kayla Henry also made the All-American team this year. Southwick's Ryan LeClair received the Henry O. Holley Award (Boys Division 3 MVP). Holley was the principal at Monson High School for more than 35 years. LeClair was a senior tri-captain of his soccer team. "I've worked very hard this season and it feels great to be recognized for it," said LeClair, who's a three-sport athlete. "We lost to Belchertown in the Western Mass. semifinals, but we did win the most games this year since I've been a member of the varsity soccer team. It was a great season."

WRESTLING

Wrestlers relying on middle weight talent to succeed this season

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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AGAWAM – Numbers are a bit lower this season for the Agawam High School wrestling team, but coach Armando Ramos is optimistic about the team heading in this season. "We have a lot of kids who are working really hard in the preseason," said Ramos. "We have some really talented kids." The problem for Ramos is where to put some of these talents as he is stacked in a number of weight classes with not a ton of wiggle room.

"We actually have four wrestlers who can qualify for one weight class," said Ramos. "So with that, we may have to shift the lineup at times and some kids will have to wrestle up a weight class." Such flexibility is allowed though there is not really any room for a wrestler to move down a weight class unless they actually drop the weight. Ramos is excited about his captains for the upcoming season. Among them are Hayden Mandrelá, Troy Carroll, and Spencer Kozlak.



Coach Armando Ramos addresses the wrestling team at practice on Monday. TURLEY PUBLICATIONS PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Agawam wrestling coaches demonstrate a move during practice. The team is preparing for their season opener this weekend at Sci-Tech.

Sports

Brownies will bring youth to court this season

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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AGAWAM – The Agawam High School girls basketball team won their first tournament game in several years when they defeated Sci-Tech to open the playoffs.

Agawam will sport a very interesting roster composition this season, with five sophomores and one freshman making the team this year.

Last year, the Brownies did have a couple of scores on the team, but the offense did struggle at times. To get to 12 wins, Agawam relied more on their defense to get the job done, but their defense was not enough to get past Holyoke's offense in the quarter-finals.

Holyoke would beat Agawam 50-40 in that round after Agawam had beaten the Cybercats.

While Agawam has plenty of youngsters on the team, there are three seniors and two seniors on the roster.

Bianca Culhane is a returning senior forward. She was one of the top players coming off the bench for the Brownies and also saw some starting time as well. Culhane was great on defense and also did a well providing key baskets for the Brownies.

Samantha Stratton saw regular time as a guard in the lineup the last two years. She will likely be the starting guard for the Brownies in the upcoming season.

The other senior on the team is Sydney Carra, who saw limited time last season.

Juniors on the team include Elizabeth Milliken and Madison Lockwood. As the season progresses, Lockwood found herself on the court more and more and figured into the offense. She will get the opportunity this season to be a regular contributor to the offense this season.

Newcomers to the season include sophomores Meghan Haines, Natalie Pullen, Jasmine Pszczela, and Cassidy Patterson. Coach Harold Cote also chose Peyton Lemke, a freshman, to the varsity.

With not a lot of experience at the top of the lineup, Agawam will definitely have its work cut out it with a very difficult schedule.

Among the teams on its schedule early in the season are Holy-



oke, the team that eliminated the Brownies from playoff contention last year. The Brownies will also face the reigning and defending Western Massachusetts Division I champions in Chicopee Comprehensive. The Brownies will also have to face Central, a perennial powerhouse in girls basketball.

In their Valley League, Agawam will meet Westfield, Minnechaug, East Longmeadow, and Ludlow.

The Brownies will open up the regular season tomorrow when they host Chicopee High School at 7 p.m. Agawam then travels to Holyoke on Dec. 15 at 7 p.m.



The Agawam High School girls basketball team practices on Monday afternoon in the gymnasium. The Brownies are preparing for their season opener on Friday night. TURLEY PUBLICATIONS PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Brownies take part in All-Star contest

By Tim Peterson

Turley Publications Sports Correspondent

SPRINGFIELD - More than 80 girls played in the two Western Massachusetts Senior Girls All-Star Soccer games, which took place at Berte Field located on the Springfield Central campus, last Tuesday, Nov. 21.

The first match of the evening featured the Division 3 and 4 All-Stars.

The members of the white squad from the Turley Publications coverage area were Lydia Kinsman (Southwick), Alex Mello (Southwick), Jen Fabrycki (Monson), Bee Murphy (Monson) and Maddie Gerry (Monson).

Kinsman and Mello led Southwick to the Western Mass. Division 3 semifinals. Southwick lost, 2-1, to Western Mass. champion Granby.

Kinsman, who was selected to the Division 3 All-State team for the first time, had verbally committed to play college soccer at the University of Bridgeport, which competes at the Division 2 level. She recently changed her mind and she's now hoping to play soccer at a Division 3 college.

"I have decided to decommit," said Kinsman following the match. "I'll probably play soccer at the Division 3 level next year. It's a better fit for me both academically and athletically. I also want to stay close to home."

The three all-star players from Monson High School have played in the Division 4 state finals the past three years.

After splitting the previous two meetings with East Bridgewater in the state finals, the Lady Mustangs lost a heartbreaker to them in this year's state championship match, which was held at Milford High School a couple of weeks ago.

"I probably won't be playing soccer in college, so it's a little bit sad because this is my final soccer game," said Gerry. "I wish it was a little bit warmer, but I really enjoyed playing in this All-Star game tonight. It's something that I've always wanted to do."

Murphy, who hasn't made her college decision yet, was selected to the All-State team and the All-Region team.

Fabrycki wasn't able to play in the All-Star game because of an injury. She also made the All-State team.

One of the coaches for the white team was Monson head coach Eric Degnan, who was named as the 2016 NSCAA Massachusetts small school coach of

the year. Southwick head coach Todd Downie was the other coach for the white team.

The members of the red squad from the Turley Publications coverage area, which was coached by South Hadley head coach Eric Wood, were Erin Mikalchus (Granby), Caroline Cyr (Granby) Jess Patruno (Granby), Meg Sidur (Ware), Ashley Grout (Ware), Michelle Zawalski (Ware), Hannah Zachowski (Palmer), and Maddie Stahelski (Palmer).

Mikalchus was selected to the All-State team for the second year in a year.

Stahelski is still planning to play soccer at Sacred Heart University next fall.

"I'm very excited to become a member of the Sacred Heart women's soccer team next year. It's something that I've been working towards my whole life," Stahelski said. "It was very nice to get the opportunity play in this All-Star game tonight. Some of them were my teammates on my FC Stars team. It's a lot of fun."

More than half of the players on the Division 1 red team were from the Turley Publications coverage area. They were Ashley Rouleau (Chicopee Comp), Gabby Chavez (Chicopee Comp), Lyndsey Fleming (Belchertown), Kayla Henry (Belchertown), Lauren Leblanc (Belchertown), Lauryn Parent (Belchertown), Hannah Sugrue (Belchertown), Nissa Pereira (Ludlow), who made the All-State team, Marianna Goncalves (Ludlow), Taylor Masses (Ludlow), Andreea Jozefczyk (Ludlow), Tasha Kwatowski (Ludlow), Abbie Terrinca (Ludlow), Callie Cavanaugh (Holyoke) Amber Lempke (Holyoke), Christina Rojas (Holyoke), Tatiano Gero (Chicopee), Ariel Lafrenier (Chicopee), and Kylie Ratelle (Chicopee), who made the All-State team.

Henry, who was selected to both the All-State and the All-Region teams, is also the first All-American player in any sport in the history of Belchertown High School.

The coach of the Division 1 red team was Belchertown head coach Chris Mogavero.

The members of the white team from the Turley Publications coverage area are Caleigh O'Brien (Minnechaug), who made the All-State team, Sarah Carron (Agawam), who made the All-State team for the second consecutive year, Bailey Laviolette (Agawam) and Caitlyn Shean (Agawam).

The coach of the Division 1 white team was Minnechaug head coach Nundi Goncalves. He was assisted by Matt Mosher, who's also an assistant girls soccer coach at Minnechaug.



SEND US YOUR SPORTS PHOTOS

Have you taken photos at a local sports event and want to see them published in this paper?

Email your image(s) with description to:

dforbes@turley.com or gscibelli@turley.com

Sports

Agawam 2016-2017 winter varsity schedule

Boys Basketball			
Friday, Dec. 9	Away	Commerce	7 p.m.
Monday, Dec. 12	Home	Northampton	7 p.m.
Thursday, Dec. 15	Home	Renaissance	7 p.m.
Wednesday, Dec. 28	Home	Holyoke	7 p.m.
Friday, Dec. 30	Away	Westfield	7 p.m.
Mon, Jan. 2	Away	East Longmeadow	7 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 5	Home	Chicopee Comp	7 p.m.
Monday, Jan. 9	Home	South Hadley	7 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 12	Home	Ludlow	7 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 17	Away	Belchertown	7 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 19	Home	Minnechaug	7 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 24	Home	Longmeadow	7 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 27	Away	Sabis	7 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 31	Away	Chicopee Comp	7 p.m.
Friday, Feb. 3	Away	South Hadley	7 p.m.
Tuesday, Feb. 7	Away	Ludlow	7 p.m.
Friday, Feb. 10	Home	Belchertown	7 p.m.
Tuesday, Feb. 14	Away	Minnechaug	7 p.m.
Friday, Feb. 17	Away	Longmeadow	7 p.m.
Tuesday, Feb. 21	Home	Sabis	7 p.m.
Girls Basketball			
Friday, Dec. 9	Home	Chicopee	7 p.m.
Thursday, Dec. 15	Away	Holyoke	7 p.m.
Tuesday, Dec. 20	Home	Sabis	7 p.m.
Friday, Dec. 23	Home	Chicopee Comp	7 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 3	Away	West Springfield	7 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 6	Home	Longmeadow	7 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 10	Home	West Springfield	7 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 13	Away	Minnechaug	7 p.m.
Monday, Jan. 16	Home	Hampshire	7 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 18	Home	Amherst	7 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 20	Home	Central	7 p.m.
Monday, Jan. 23	Away	Ludlow	7 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 26	Away	Northampton	7 p.m.
Monday, Jan. 30	Away	Westfield	7 p.m.
Thursday, Feb. 2	Home	Minnechaug	7 p.m.
Monday, Feb. 6	Home	East Longmeadow	7 p.m.
Thursday, Feb. 9	Home	Ludlow	7 p.m.
Thursday, Feb. 16	Home	Westfield	7 p.m.
Monday, Feb. 20	Away	East Longmeadow	7 p.m.
Wednesday, Feb. 22	Away	Chicopee	7 p.m.
Ice Hockey			
Saturday, Dec. 10	Away	East Longmeadow	3:10 p.m.
Thursday, Dec. 15	Away	Minnechaug	8:30 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 17	Home	West Springfield	2 p.m.
Wednesday, Dec. 21	Away	Westborough	7 p.m.
Thursday, Dec. 22	Away	Longmeadow	6:30 p.m.
Friday, Dec. 30	Away	Ludlow	8:20 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 7	Home	Wayland	3:10 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 12	Home	Westfield	6:30 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 14	Home	Minnechaug	5:10 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 18	Away	Westfield	7 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 21	Home	Grafton	12 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 28	Home	East Longmeadow	12 p.m.
Wednesday, Feb. 1	Away	Auburn	6:30 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 4	Home	Chicopee	6 p.m.
Tuesday, Feb. 7	Home	Ludlow	8:20 p.m.
Thursday, Feb. 9	Home	Longmeadow	6:30 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 11	Away	Marblehead	2:30 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 18	Away	West Springfield	12 p.m.
Monday, Feb. 20	Home	Swampscott	2:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Feb. 22	Home	Cohasset	2:30 p.m.
Skiing			
Tuesday, Jan. 17	PVIAC Race 2		5 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 19	PVIAC Race 3		5 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 26	PVIAC Race 4		5 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 31	PVIAC Race 5		5 p.m.
Thursday, Feb. 2	PVIAC Race 6		5 p.m.
Tuesday, Feb. 7	PVIAC Race 7		5 p.m.
Swimming			
Friday, Dec. 9	Away	Minnechaug	4 p.m.
Tuesday, Dec. 13	Home	Renaissance	4 p.m.
Friday, Dec. 16	Home	Westfield	4 p.m.
Tuesday, Dec. 20	Home	Longmeadow	4 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 3	Home	Northampton	4 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 6	Away	Belchertown	4 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 10	Home	Chicopee Comp	4 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 13	Home	Easthampton	4 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 17	Away	Central	4 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 20	Away	Palmer	4 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 24	Home	Pope Francis	4 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 27	Away	South Hadley	4 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 31	Away	Monson	4 p.m.
Wrestling			
Saturday, Dec. 10	Away	Sci-Tech Duals	9 a.m.
Wednesday, Dec. 14	Home	Putnam	7 p.m.
Thursday, Dec. 22	Away	West Springfield	6 p.m.
Thursday, Dec. 29	Home	Phil Tomkiel Tourney	9 a.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 4	Away	Northampton	6:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 11	Home	Holyoke	7 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 18	Away	Westfield	7 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 25	Away	Chicopee	7 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 28	Away	Pathfinder	10 a.m.
Wednesday, Feb. 1	Home	Longmeadow	7 p.m.
Wednesday, Feb. 8	Home	Ludlow	7 p.m.

Agawam in All-Star gala

By Tim Peterson
Turley Publications Sports Correspondent

SPRINGFIELD - The annual Western Massachusetts Senior Boys All-Star Soccer Classic was held on a chilly night at Berte Field, which is located on the Springfield Central campus, last Monday, Nov. 21.

The All-Star soccer match, which was begun by John Pantuosco in 1994, is sponsored by the Western Mass. Soccer Coaches Association.

The first contest of the evening featured the Division 3 and 4 All-Star players.

The red team, which was co-coached by Palmer boys varsity coach Jon Remillard and Pantuosco, who's the boys soccer coach at Pope Francis, defeated the White squad 4-1.

"There were a lot of very good soccer players out on the field tonight and I really enjoyed coaching in the All-Star game again this year," said Remillard. "The final score really doesn't matter very much in an All-Star game. It was a fun night for the players."

Remillard also played in the All-Star game when he was a senior at Palmer High School.

The members of the red squad from the Turley Publications coverage area were Zach Gorham (Granby), Nehemiah Wilson (South Hadley), Nick Chambers (Southwick), Matt Remillard (Palmer), Tim Haley (Palmer), Ben McCoy (Palmer), Austin Smith (Palmer), Brian Castor (Southwick), Ryan LeClair (Southwick), Mike Sheil (Southwick), Daylon Kongo (Granby) and Doug L'Abbee (Granby).

Matt Remillard and Castor were also selected to the Division 3 All-State team, which is voted on by the coaches, for the first time.

The white team was co-coached by Ware head coach Scott Foley and Monson head coach Byron Brown, who guided the Mustangs to the Division 4 state title a couple of weeks ago.

"Winning the Division 4 state title in my first year at Monson was a fun ride," Brown said. "We had a very good group of soccer players led by the seniors. I also enjoyed coaching in this All-Star game. It's a good opportunity for the players to be seen by the college coaches."

The members of the white squad from the state championship Monson team were Noah Malo, Michael Murphy, Mike Tranghese and Connor Hicks, who scored the game-winning goal in the state finals on an amazing shot with 7 seconds remaining in the first overtime period.

Murphy and Hicks were selected to the Division 4 All-State team. Hicks who is planning to play college soccer next year, also made the All-Region team.

The other members of the white squad from the Turley Publications coverage area were Tanner Clark (Belchertown), Alec Morgado (Belchertown), Hayden Benis (Belchertown), Leon Gaumond (Ware), Josh Dugay (Ware), Jake Thompson (Ware) and Teddy King (Pathfinder).

"It was a lot of fun playing in this All-Star soccer game with all of these talented players," said Thompson, who's a three-sport athlete "It was also awesome playing soccer for coach Foley one more time."

Scott Foley also coached in last year's All-Star game.

"It was nice that Leon, Josh, and Jake were selected to play in the All-Star team this year," Foley said. "I re-

ally enjoyed coaching those guys the past couple of years."

The Division 1 All-Star match was won by the white squad by the final score of 5-1.

The white squad was co-coached by Minnechaug head coach John O'Keefe and Northampton head coach Brian Brown.

The members of the white squad from the Turley Publications coverage area were Michael Rita (Minnechaug), David Walbridge (Minnechaug), Michael Alexander (Minnechaug), Vincent Demattia (Minnechaug), Brendan Plumb (Minnechaug), Jacob Belemjian (Minnechaug), Luis Nieves (Agawam), Dan Korotich (Agawam), Jonny Kelley (Agawam) and Zach Rivers (Agawam).

Rita is the first boys soccer player from Western Massachusetts to be named to the All-American team since Ryan Reynolds (Cathedral) in 2012. Rita and Walbridge were selected to the Division 1 All-State team.

The members of the red squad from the Turley Publications coverage area were Jon Dos Santos (Ludlow), Josh Labonte (Ludlow), Tiago Dias (Ludlow), Matt Jordan (Ludlow), Chad Noga (Ludlow), Dan Vazquez (Chicopee), Ross Alvaro (Chicopee Comp), Jacob Tompkins (Chicopee Comp) and Anthony Marafuga (Chicopee Comp).

Dos Santos and Labonte also made the Division 1 All-State team.

The two coaches for the Division 1 red team were Nick Gumlaw (Springfield) and Tom Rivet (Chicopee).

Tim Peterson is a sports correspondent for Turley Publications. He can be reached at dforbes@turley.com.

WRESTLING ■ from page 9

Kozlak emerged as a starter last season and would finish in second place in the 195-pound weight class. He went to the state meet and placed fifth in Division 1. Carroll was fourth at Western Mass., but did not place at states.

Kozlak will be counted to provide consistency at the heavier weights and could even be called on to wrestle at 220 pounds at times. He is also coming off a great season with the football team and is healthy heading into the first meet of the season on Saturday morning.

Like most wrestling teams, there are often "wrestle-offs" to compete for spots in weight classes. That is where two wrestlers will face each in practice to determine a starter at a given

weight class. As of Monday, Ramos said that had not occurred yet so he is not sure who will be starting at every weight class.

Among newcomers, he did say freshmen Thomas Carraciolo at 160 pounds and Harrison Mandralla have an opportunity to crack the starting lineup.

As always, Agawam will host the Phil Tomkiel Holiday Tournament on Thursday, Dec. 29. The meet has always been a great draw and features 13 teams so far on the slate, with familiar squads such as Southwick, Franklin Tech, and Gateway schedule to attend. Longmeadow, Minnechaug, and four teams from Connecticut are also set for the tournament.

In their league, Holyoke joins the Suburban League since their switch from being Dean Tech in Division 3.

"Dean was a Division 3 powerhouse and they have a great coach and program," said Ramos. "We are really looking forward to the challenge."

Ramos worries about depth, but said the team's biggest strength will be leadership heading into the season.

"We have great senior captains," said Ramos. "They are the heart and sole of the team. I am really proud to coach them. They have grown into fine young men of character as well as 'tough-as-nails' wrestlers."

"It's like have 3 more assistants in practice because they can teach and run drills and run conditioning. It's great when your leaders are the hardest workers in practice. Agawam opens up with multiple dual meets on Saturday morning at the High School of Science and Technology.



Spencer Kozlak, who placed second at 195 pounds last season in Western Mass. grapples during practice with a teammate. Kozlak is a captain this season.



Hayden Mandrella practices a move. TURLEY PUBLICATIONS PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Out & About

OUR CALENDAR SECTION is intended to promote free events, or those that directly affect a volunteer-driven organization. Paid events that are not deemed benefits do not qualify. Non-charitable events that charge the public for profit are not allowed as we consider that paid advertising. The deadline to submit calendar items is Monday at noon. Send to the Agawam Advertiser News at aan@turley.com, fax to 413-786-8457, or mail to Turley Publications, 380 Union St., West Springfield, MA 01089. We usually print at least one week prior to an event. The listings should be brief with only time, date, location, activity explanation and contact information.

Friday, Dec. 9

YULETIDE OPEN HOUSE TOURS today and tomorrow from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Storrowton Village Museum on the grounds of the Big E, 1305 Memorial Ave., West Springfield. General admission, \$5; children under 6 free.

EASTERN DOG CLUB ALL BREED DOG SHOW today through Sunday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Better Living Center on the grounds of the Big E, 1305 Memorial Ave., West Springfield. Free admission.

ANTIQUE AND MODERN FIREARMS today through Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and tomorrow from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Better Living Center on the grounds of the Big E, 1305 Memorial Ave., West Springfield. Admission \$12; free for children under 12 with parent / guardian. Coupon available online.

Saturday, Dec. 10

WINTER MARKET will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. inside the Episcopal Church of the Atonement, 36 Court St., Westfield and will include vendors with seasonal products and local crafters with pottery, candles, woodcrafts and home decorating items. The building is handicap accessible with free parking, and professional babysitting is provided.

SANTA WILL FLY IN on his sleigh for a visit from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Park Square gazebo in Westfield. Santa will have candy canes for children.

Sunday, Dec. 11

“ROCKS FOR TOTS” TOY DRIVE hosted by Music Speaks music school from 3 to 7 p.m. at the American Legion Post 185, 478 Springfield St., Feeding Hills. Admission is \$10 per person plus a new, unwrapped toy to be donated to Toys for Tots.

THE WEST SPRINGFIELD COIN CLUB will meet at 7 p.m. in the Church of the Good Shepherd, 214 Elm St., West Springfield. A special coin topic will be presented and discussed. Refreshments available. Guests welcome. For more information, call Peter Setian at 413-789-2061.

Wednesday, Dec. 14

THE ELM-BELCHER MASONIC LODGE, 53 River St., Agawam offers an all-you-can-eat spaghetti supper at a cost of \$8 for adults, \$4 for children. The public is welcome.

AGAWAM SENIOR CENTER CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY SHOW with Richie and Kathy Mitnick and The Sounds of Music Singers at 1 p.m. Admission is \$3 per person and two canned goods and \$5 per person without canned goods. Refreshments will be served. The Senior Center is at 954 Main St., Agawam.

Saturday, Dec. 17

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CONCERT at Second Baptist Church of Suffield, 100 N. Main St. at 3 p.m. Free will offering to benefit the Fuel Bank administered by the Suffield Emergency Aid Association.

BAKE SALE at Saint Peter and Saint Paul Russian Orthodox Church, 118 Carew St., Springfield, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 17. Items for sale will include Christmas cookies, baked items, perogies and stuffed cabbage. Orders will be taken until Dec. 7. To place an

order, call 413-786-7693.

SANTA WILL FLY IN on his sleigh for a visit from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Park Square gazebo in Westfield. Santa will have candy canes for children.

Sunday, Dec. 18

LIVE NATIVITY at Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church, 224 Sheep Pasture Road, Southwick during and shortly after the 10 a.m. Mass. Hot cocoa and cookies will be served.

TRINITY CHAMBER SINGERS AND HANDBELL CHOIR concert at 3:30 p.m. in the sanctuary of Trinity United Methodist Church, 361 Sumner Ave., Springfield. Free admission.

Tuesday, Dec. 20

THE AGAWAM CULTURAL COUNCIL will meet at 7 p.m. at the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper St. The meeting is open to the public. The ACC is looking for new members.

Thursday, Dec. 22

THE MUPPETS CHRISTMAS CAROL holiday movie for teens at 2:30 p.m. at the Southwick Public Library, 95 Feeding Hills Road. Refreshments will be served. For more information, contact the reference desk at 413-569-1221, ext. 3.

ONGOING

THE FRIENDS OF THE AGAWAM PUBLIC LIBRARY’S Open Juried Art Show is on display at the Agawam Public Library through Nov. 25. The artwork may be seen Mondays through Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Fridays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The library is at 750 Cooper St., Agawam, and can be reached by phone at 413-789-1550.

BEGINNER TAI CHI classes at the Southwick Senior Center on Wednesdays from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Easy stretching and slow, gentle movements that improve balance and strength and enhance the immune system. For more information, call 413-569-5498.

ADULT DROP-IN SIT & KNIT meets at the Agawam Public Library at 750 Cooper St. Tuesdays from 1-3 p.m. Bring your sticks and join other knitters for creative time. No registration is required.

GRANDPARENT’S PLAYGROUP Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., at St. David’s Church, 699 Springfield

BULLETIN ■ from page 8

Massachusetts AFL-CIO Scholarship Awards Program; Young Entrepreneur Foundation; American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program; 2017 Profile in Courage Essay; Elon Teaching Fellows Program; Skidmore College; Ronald McDonald House Charities US Scholarship Program; Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps; Big Y Scholarship; Charitable and Educational Trust of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, Order Sons of Italy in America; Agawam High School PTSO; American College Foundation; B. Davis Scholarship; Aspiring Fashion Professional Scholarship; Aspiring Animation Professional Scholarship; Aspiring Business Professional Scholarship.

Meritaid.com: On this free website, students can complete a profile and then access the college merit scholarships that match their profile. This organization does not sell its email lists to third parties. The site includes a comprehensive directory of merit scholarships and academic scholarships across the country.

Words of wisdom: “Life is not a mirror; it’s a window.”

— Signor Orefice, Italian teacher

St., Feeding Hills. This free infant and toddler playgroup features music and movement, fostering children’s interactions and sharing skills. Open to all grandparents and their grandchildren. Follows school schedule.

MOM 2 MOM takes place the second Tuesday of every month October through June, 9:30 to 11 a.m. at Agawam Congregational Church, 745 Main St. A round-table discussion hosted by a local “veteran” mom, this is a great way to have further conversation on recent café themes and parent education events, celebrate parenting and receive encouragement for the trials.

THE WESTFIELD WOMAN’S CLUB’s clubhouse is available for rentals for wedding receptions, bridal showers, baby showers, graduation celebrations, and birthday and anniversary parties by the hour or the day. For more information, Lilian at 413-568-2916.

THE AGAWAM ST. PATRICK COMMITTEE meets the third Wednesday of each month, September through June, at 6:30 p.m. in the lower level classroom at St. John the Evangelist Church, 833 Main St., Agawam. For information on how to join, call Vera Conway at 413-786-3247 or email Rosemary Sandlin at rosemarysandlin@gmail.com

ADULT DROP-IN SIT AND KNIT meets every Tuesday from 1-3 p.m. at the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper St. No registration needed.

AGAWAM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, 459 Mill St., Agawam, offers “Crochet Club” every other Tuesday from 7 to 8:30 p.m. This club is open to all needle-workers, including crocheters, knitters, quilters, and embroiderers. For more information, call 413-786-7991.

A BREAST CANCER AND MASTECTOMY SUPPORT GROUP meets the fourth Tuesday of each month from 6 to 7:15 p.m. at 2 South Bridge Drive, Suite 1B, Agawam. Registration is required by calling 413-789-0200 or online at www.survivorjourneys.org.

AN ALL CANCER SUPPORT GROUP meets the first Tuesday of each month from 6 to 7 p.m. at Sacred Heart Parish Center, 1061 Springfield St., Feeding Hills. Registration is required by calling 413-789-0200 or online at www.survivorjourneys.org.

A BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP meets the second Wednesday of each month at Heritage Woods Assisted Facility, 462 Main St., Agawam. Registration is required by calling 413-789-0200 or online at www.survivorjourneys.org.

Agawam Senior Center

Lunch Menu

Monday, Dec. 12: Tomato soup, tuna salad on a roll, lettuce and tomato, apples.

Tuesday, Dec. 13: Chicken marsala, mashed potatoes, dilled carrots, pudding.

Wednesday, Dec. 14: Sweet and sour meatballs over rice, mixed vegetable, peaches.

Thursday, Dec. 15: Seafood casserole, Caesar salad, mixed fruit.

Friday, Dec. 16: Chicken topped with asparagus cream sauce, baked potato, green bean casserole, Christmas cheesecake.

Calendar of Events

Monday, Dec. 12: 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Monday-Thursday, As Good as New Christmas Tag Sale (dining room); 8 a.m., weight training; 8:15 a.m., yoga; 9 a.m., chiropractic seminar with Dr. Morin (garden room); 9:30 a.m., line dancing; 11:30 a.m., Gentle Yoga; 12:30 p.m., Writing Club; 1 p.m., Bingo; 5:30 p.m., Zumba Gold; 6 p.m., survivor cancer group.

YOUR CAR, TRUCK OR CAMPER may be worth more as a donation than a trade-in. Call the Massachusetts Association for the Blind at 888-613-2777 for more information. Towing is free. All donations are tax deductible.

Restaurants to participate in Jimmy Fund event

Three Agawam restaurants will join more than 20 of western Massachusetts’ culinary greats at the 27th annual Chefs for Jimmy, presented by Winer Levsky Group of UBS Financial Services Inc., to support adult and pediatric cancer care and research at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Chefs for Jimmy will be held at Chez Josef in Agawam, 6:30-9:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 20, and will feature tastings of delicious local dishes, an opportunity drawing, a silent auction and more.

Participating Agawam area restaurants include Chez Josef, Crestview Country Club and Murphy’s Pub.

Chefs for Jimmy is an annual event hosted in honor of Neal Weber, a long-time supporter of the Jimmy Fund. Participating restaurants and caterers will create dishes and décor to reflect the 2017 event theme of “Denim and Diamonds.” This event is hosted by the Jimmy Fund Council of Western Massachusetts.

Since 1990, Chefs for Jimmy has raised more than \$1.5 million for adult and pediatric cancer care and research at Dana-Farber. Tickets are \$100. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.jimmyfund.org/chefs-for-jimmy.

AWARD ■ from page 10

LeClair was a starting defender, but he did score two goals.

LeClair’s first goal was against South Hadley in the middle of the regular season. His second goal came against Monument Mountain in a Division 3 quarterfinal match, which the Rams won 3-0.

The second-seeded Southwick Rams (13-4-1) lost to the Belchertown Orioles, 3-0, in the semifinals.

The only other member of the Southwick boys soccer team who had received the Division 3 MVP Award was John Collins in 2014.

From 1972-2012, a total of nine Southwick boys soccer players were selected as MVPs by the PVOSA when they competed at the Division 2 level.

The Robert C. Smith Award (Girls Division 3 MVP) was presented to Southwick senior Lydia Kinsman for the second consecutive year.

“It’s a huge honor for me to receive the MVP award two years in a row,”

Kinsman said. “I’ve received a lot of support from a lot of people over the years, especially from my mom. I really enjoyed coming to this banquet again this year.”

Kinsman, who plays several different positions, scored eight goals and had a team-high eight assists this past season. She finished her outstanding high school career with 32 goals and 26 assists for a total of 56 points.

The third-seeded Lady Rams, who entered the postseason tournament with a 9-4-4 record, lost to second-seeded Granby, 2-1, in the Western Mass. Division 3 semifinals.

The Dave Grieve Award (Boys Division 4 MVP) went to Monson senior Noah Malo.

The Bruno Rumpal (Large Schools boys) Sportsmanship Award went to Holyoke.

The Bob McIntyre (Large Schools Girls) Sportsmanship Award went to Agawam.

“This is the second time in the

past five years that we’ve received the Sportsmanship Award,” said Agawam head coach Laura Wray-Ramos. “I’ve been coaching the varsity team for the past 18 years and I think my team’s have only received a total of three yellow cards from the referees during that time. We have never received any red cards. All of the players that I’ve coached at the varsity level are great kids. The Agawam youth soccer coaches also deserve a lot of credit.”

The Jimmie Downie Award went to referee Marc Dawson.

The Paul Bogan Service Award went to referee Al Domainque, who’s also the new PVOSA president.

The Larry E. Briggs Award went to Larry Kelly, who was a very successful head coach of the Cathedral girls soccer team.

Tim Peterson is a sports correspondent for Turley Publications. He can be reached at dforbes@turley.com.



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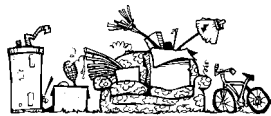
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For Rent

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Legals

LEGAL NOTICE PUBLIC HEARING

The Agawam City Council Administrative Sub-Committee will conduct a public hearing on **Monday, December 19, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.**, at the Roberta G. Doering School, 68 Main Street, Agawam, MA on the petition of Verizon New England, Inc. for permission to lay and maintain underground conduits and handholes, with the wires and cables to be placed therein, under the surface of both Herbert P. Almgren Drive,

Agawam, MA to provide for the distribution of intelligence and communications; also for permission to lay and maintain underground conduits, manholes, cables and wires in the above or intersecting public ways for the purpose of making connections with such poles and buildings as it may desire for distributing purposes.

Paul C. Cavallo, Chairman
Administrative
Sub-Committee

12/8/16

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Our Town



Giavanna Ruscio

Ruscio family welcomes Giavanna Catherine

HAMPDEN — Christopher and Lindsey (Estock) Ruscio, of Hampden, are pleased to announce the birth of their second daughter, Giavanna Catherine Ruscio, born Nov. 21, 2016, at Mercy Medical Center in Springfield. She weighed 9 pounds, 2 ounces, and was 22 inches long. Her mother was a former advertising sales representative at the Agawam Advertiser News.

Gia was welcomed home by her sister, Leilani Emily, 2 1/2.

Her grandparents are Stephen and Pamela Estock of Southwick, Kendall and Paula Wayne of East Longmeadow, and Cheryl Ruscio of Westfield. Great-grandparents are Emily Estock of Southwick and Alvin and Eleanor Seligman of East Longmeadow.

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Professionals share experience with Jr. High students

The West of the River Chamber of Commerce, in conjunction with the Agawam Junior High School, hosted its annual Career Day on Dec. 1. The event introduced students to local business owners and specialty tradespeople to learn more about various fields of work.

Some of the attendees and speakers included Armand Dubie, Agawam Police Department; Hunter Golden, Valley Blue Sox; Todd McDonald, Springfield Thunderbirds; Dave Ratner, Dave's Soda and Pet City; Mark Tansey, Partners Restaurant; and John Weiss, Ormsby Insurance. Also in attendance were School Superintendent William Sapelli and Mayor Richard Cohen.

Similar events are held at Agawam High School, West Springfield High School, and the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative in conjunction with the West of the River Chamber of Commerce's Education Committee in May and June every year.



Hunter Golden of the Valley Blue Sox speaks to Agawam Junior High School students.



John Weiss of Ormsby Insurance talks to students during Career Day.



Mark Tansey of Partners Restaurant speaks with students at last week's AJHS Career Day. SUBMITTED PHOTO

Kids, planet benefit from toy exchange



Veronica Bobskill, Alexandria Taylor, and Alyssa Gravel reminisce with some of the children's books donated to the Holiday Used Toy Exchange last week. TURLEY PUBLICATIONS PHOTO BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Hundreds of toys, games and books were collected last Friday for the town's first-ever Holiday Used Toy Exchange, at the Agawam Public Library.

The event was sponsored by National Honor Society at Agawam High School and the Zero Waste Club, led by former AHS teacher Nancy Bobskill, as a source of holiday gifts for residents on tight budgets, as well as to increase the lifespan of consumer goods that would otherwise be discarded as trash.

Families looking for free toys were invited to "shop" the exchange on Saturday, Dec. 3. Any toys that remained were to be donated to a local charity.



Rachel Pellegrini checks out some of the toys. TURLEY PUBLICATIONS PHOTO BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Giovanna Reachia sorts out some recent donations. TURLEY PUBLICATIONS PHOTO BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Hundreds of toys were collected last Friday at the Agawam Public Library, then donated to local families or charities on Saturday. TURLEY PUBLICATIONS PHOTO BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Members of Agawam High School's National Honor Society and Agawam's Zero Waste Club are pictured with Mayor Richard Cohen, far right. SUBMITTED PHOTO